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James Sheldon family papers, 1814-1950

Mss. C64-7

Call Number: Mss. C64-7
Creator: Sheldon, James, 1824-1887
Title: James Sheldon Family Papers
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Notes:

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Biographical / Historical Note:

A lifelong resident of Buffalo, James Sheldon was a highly respected judge, lawyer, writer and speaker whose family did much to promote the material, cultural and civic interests of Buffalo.

His father, James Sheldon III (1792-1850), was a prominent lawyer. Born in New Hartford, N.Y. he attended Fairfield Academy. After settling in Buffalo in 1815, he practiced law with his partners Albert I-I. Tracy and Charles G. Olmstead until 1832.

By the end of his career, the younger James Sheldon had become the chief judge of the Superior Court of Buffalo. He was also noted as a writer of poetry (under the nom de plume of William Chiddon) and historical reminiscences (*Life of Oliver Forward*, *Biography of Pascal P. Pratt* in the *Magazine of Western History*). Sheldon was also a founder and president of the Buffalo Historical Society and the Young Men's Association, a member of the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences and the Fine Arts Academy, and a trustee of Wells College in Cayuga County, NY.

The following timeline gives a chronology of his chief accomplishments:

1821 Born in his parents' house at Pearl and Swan Streets.

1834-36 Attended Fredonia Academy.

1837-1839 Attended Geneva College (later known as Hobart College).

1839 Returned to Buffalo and began to study law under Thomas Sherwood. After several years, was admitted as a practicing attorney in the Supreme Court, and later admitted as a solicitor and counsellor in the Court of chancery.

1847 Elected city attorney.

1848 President of the Young Men's Association, which Sheldon co-founded.

1849 Admitted to practice in the United States courts.

1853 Appointed, and later elected, county judge with term to extend through 1864.

1854 Married Sarah Elizabeth Carew (1833-1901) of Stonington, CT, daughter of Daniel Carew and Grace B. Wilgus. They had nine children (see below).

1863 or 64 Purchased "The Evergreens," his house at 1094 Main Street, Buffalo. The house was built in 1849 and demolished in 1907.

1864 Appointed United States commissioner.

1867 Republican nominee for state senator. Supervisor, Eleventh Ward.

1871 Elected judge of the Superior Court, taking office on January 1, 1872; retained position through 1886.

1875 president of the Buffalo Historical Society, of which he was a founder. He served again as president in 1886.

1878-1886 Chief Judge of Superior Court, after the retirement of Judge Clinton.

1887 Died May 1 at his residence on Main Street.

Children of James and Sarah Sheldon

1. *Grace Carew Sheldon* (1855-1921) Well-known Buffalo newspaper reporter. She earned a degree from Wells College in 1875. On her frequent travels she published many articles, including reports of her tour of South American in 1896 and Europe in 1895, when she was chosen as the first female American delegate to the International Press Congress at Bordeaux, France (the series she wrote about this latter journey was later published as a book, *From Pluckemin to Paris*). At the time of her death, she was the editor of a feature in the *Buffalo Times* called "This Day in Buffalo's History." Grace Carew Sheldon was active in many organizations, including the Mayflower Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Society of Colonial Wars, and she was a founder of the Scribbler's Club and the Woman's Exchange. She was closely associated, apparently through her newspaper work, with veteran's organizations of several New York Civil War regiments.
2. *James Sheldon V* (1856-1937) - Lawyer.
3. *Sara Palmer Sheldon* (1858-1939) - Attended Buffalo Seminary and Wells College; founded one of the first kindergarten classes in Buffalo; librarian at Buffalo Public Library, 1897-1932.
4. *Sylvia Alexander Sheldon* (1859-1937)
5. *George Denison Sheldon* (1860-1912) - Lawyer.
6. *Theodore Butler Sheldon* (1862-1932) - Buffalo lawyer and military leader; assisted in the formation of Co. F cadet corps of the 65th Regiment of the New York National Guard. When the company was reorganized in 1891 to become Co. H, Sheldon was promoted to 1st Lieutenant; in 1893 he became Battalion Adjutant. He became associated with the Fourth Brigade staff in 1899, serving as adjutant and inspector of small arms practice for New York State. During the Pan American Exposition of 1901, Sheldon was Captain of the Guard stationed at the U.S. Government Building. He was also one of the founders of the 74th Veteran's Association, of which he was president at the time of his death. He retired from the military in 1909. In 1894 he married Frances Ford Cattle (d. 1903) and had four children: Marion Childs, Daniel, Carew and Octavia Frances. He was remarried in 1921 to Octavia E. Nagel (d. 1948).
7. *Agnes Douglas Sheldon* (1866-1928)
8. *Henry (Harry) Alexander Sheldon* (1870-1923) - Controlled Barber Asphalt Company with brother Robert.

9. Robert Carew Sheldon (1872-1936) - Barber Asphalt Company

Biographical Notes on Other Persons Documented in this collection (Series II)

Ira A. Blossom (1789 or 90-1856) - A prominent citizen during the early days of Buffalo, residing for many years at the Eagle Tavern. Appointed resident agent for Holland Land Company in 1826; elected to Council of University of Buffalo at its founding in 1846; Erie County Town of Blossom named after him because of his land holdings there.

Caroline Carmichael McIntosh Fillmore (1813-1881) - in Morristown, NJ; became the second wife of former President Millard Fillmore in 1858. Her relation to the Sheldon family is unclear.

Edward Crosby (1850-1912) - Crosby, who was African-American, was a journalist, music critic, and telegraph editor at the *Buffalo Times*

Jabez Goodell (1775 or 6-1851) - A native of Massachusetts, Goodell came to Buffalo in the fall of 1806. Remarking of him to Joseph Ellicott in 1808, Louis LeCoulteux wrote, "He appears to be a very clever man, and bears excellent character in Massachusetts His intention is to settle in this Village." As an early settler in the region, Goodell purchased substantial amounts of real estate. As trustee of School District 16 in the 1830's Goodell was the owner of most of the land that comprised that district and so managed all of its affairs. He built a log inn known as the Broadwheel Tavern on land that stretched from Main Street to Genesee Street (now Goodell Street). Through his skillful management and through the rapid growth of Buffalo, Goodell amassed a considerable fortune. He was one of the principal leaders of the First Presbyterian Church in Buffalo's Cold Spring neighborhood, and was elected ruling elder in 1816.

Horatio Shumway (1788-1871) - Leading lawyer and civic leader in early Buffalo. Born in Belchertown, MA; studied law in New York City office of Luther Bradish. Moved in 1820 to Watertown, NY to practice law and serve as District Attorney for Jefferson County. Came to Buffalo in 1824 and earned a reputation as a capable attorney. Was elected to the State Assembly in 1846, but refused subsequent requests to serve additional terms.

Scope and Content Note:

Correspondence, poems, speeches, diaries and legal and financial papers of James Sheldon IV (1821-87), including diaries kept while a student at Geneva College, 1838-39; legal records, 1814-87, kept as a lawyer, mainly made up of documents recording real estate transactions in Erie and Cattaraugus Counties involving such principals as Ira A. Blossom, Horatio Shumway, Jabez Goodell and the Holland Land Company. Court records, including docket books, opinions and calendars for sessions presided over by James Sheldon IV, 1852-85, in Erie County Court, Supreme Court of Erie County, Superior Court of Buffalo and elsewhere; also included are loose judicial records and notes from 1821 to 1884. Correspondence and two legal documents of James Sheldon III (1792-1850), 1817-28.

Correspondence, writings, clippings, notes and collected papers of Grace Carew Sheldon., 1863-1920, including European travel reminiscences, 1895, clippings of her newspaper columns on Buffalo history, notes on several New York State Civil War volunteer regiments, four Civil War letters of A.H. Hoyt, 1863-64, and a 1915 reminiscence of the Civil War by Philip Cooke of the 151st Regt. N.Y.V. Correspondence and pattern books of Sara P. Sheldon; Pan American Exposition Guard records of Theodore B. Sheldon, 1901; three undated remedy and recipe books of Caroline C. McIntosh (later Mrs. Millard Fillmore); poems, letters and clippings of Edward W. Crosby, 1900-09; and a photo album compiled in 1950 depicting the Sheldon Homestead at 1094 Main St., Buffalo.

Arrangement:

Organized into eleven series:

- I. James Sheldon (1821-1887) personal papers, 1837-1886.
- II. James Sheldon legal records, 1814-1887.
- III. Court records of Judge James Sheldon, 1823-1885.
- IV. James Sheldon (1792-1850) papers, 1817-1828.
- V. Grace Carew Sheldon papers, 1863-1920.

- VI. Sara P. Sheldon papers, 1879-1934.
- VII. Theodore B. Sheldon Pan- American Exposition guard records, 1901.
- VIII. Caroline C. McIntosh recipe and remedy books, n.d.
- IX. Edward W. Crosby papers, 1900-1909.
- X. Scrapbooks and albums, 1909, 1950.
- XI. Scripture notebook, 1836, and Universal Exposition at Paris certificate, 1900.

Series II arranged alphabetically by principal; chronological arrangement elsewhere.

Subject Headings:

Blossom, Ira A., 1789 or 90-1856.	Real property New York (State) Cattaraugus County.
Buffalo (N.Y.). Superior Court.	Real property New York (State) Erie County.
Cooke, Philip, fl. 1864.	Scrapbooks.
Crosby, Edward W.	Sheldon, Grace Carew, 1855-1921.
Deeds.	Sheldon, James, 1792-1850.
Diaries.	Sheldon, Sara P. (Sara Palmer), 1858-1939.
Erie County (N.Y.). County Court.	Sheldon, Theodore B. (Butler), 1862-1932.
Erie County (N.Y.). Supreme Court.	Shumway, Horatio, 1788-1871.
Europe Description and travel.	United States History Civil War, 1861-1865.
Fillmore, Caroline C. (Caroline Carmichael McIntosh), 1813-1881.	United States. Army. New York Infantry Regiment, 100th (1862-1865).
Goodell, Jabez, 1775 or 6-1851.	United States. Army. New York Infantry Regiment, 151st (1862-1865).
Holland Land Company.	United States. Army. New York Infantry Regiment, 21st (1861-1863).
Hoyt, Azor, 1799-1881.	Women journalists New York (State) Buffalo.
Judicial records.	
Pan-American Exposition (1901 : Buffalo, N.Y.).	
U.S. Government Building.	
Photographs.	

Series Overview:

- I. James Sheldon 1821-1887) personal papers, 1837-1886
 - A. Papers concerning being elected judge
 - B. Correspondence, 1845-1886
 - C. Diaries, 1838-1847
 - D. Other writings, 1837-1882
 - E. Speeches and lectures, 1839-1885
 - F. Legal and financial papers, 1854-1885
- II. James Sheldon (1821-1887) legal papers as judge and lawyer,
- III. James Sheldon (1821-1887) court records, 1823-1885
 - A. Loose records and notes, 1823-1884
 - B. Bound volumes
 - B1: Erie County Court, 1854-1864
 - B2: Supreme Court of Erie County, 1852-1867
 - B3: Superior Court of Buffalo, 1872-1885
 - B4: Other courts, 1855-1871
- IV. James Sheldon (1792-1850) papers, 1817-1828
- V. Grace Carew Sheldon papers, 1863-1920

- A. Correspondence
- B. Writings
- C. Writings and notes concerning 21st, 100th, and 187th Regiments, NY Volunteers

VI. Sara P. Sheldon papers, 1879-1934

VII. Theodore B. Sheldon Pan-American Exposition guard records, 1901

VIII. Caroline C. McIntosh recipe and remedy books, n.d.

IX. Edward W. Crosby papers, 1900-1909

X. Scrapbooks and albums, 1909, 1950

XI. Scripture notebook, 1836, and certificate concerning Universal Exposition at Paris, 1900

Box and Folder List:

Box 1

I. James Sheldon (1821-1887) personal papers

A. Papers concerning election of John Sheldon as judge and other appointments, 1852-72
Folder 1: 1852-72

B. Correspondence
Folder 2: 1845-80
3: 1872-77
4: Letters from Lucy W. Hawes, 188C
5: James and Sarah Sheldon: personal correspondence, 1850-83 and n.d.

C. Diaries
Folder 6: Geneva College, Sept.-Dec. 1838
7: Notes, Geneva College, 1838-39
8: Geneva College, Jan.-May 1839
9: Dec. 1846-Sept. 1847

D. Other writings
Folder 10: Poetry, 1837-45
11: Petition to Board of Directors of N.Y. and Erie Railroad Company, Mar. 1857
12: Article written on occasion of semi-centennial of City of Buffalo, 30 June 1882

E. Speeches and lectures
Folder 13: "Blackstone Commentaries" (speech), 1839
14: 1841-44
15: 4th of July orations, 1846-69
16: "Discipline of State" (speech), 1848 (copy 1)

Box 2

Folder 1: "Discipline of State" (speech), 1848 (copy 2)
2: 1849-56
3: 1859-69

- 4: "Historical Reminiscences of General and Local Interest, 1817-18," read before Buffalo Historical Society, Mar. 1, 1869
- 5: 1885
- 6: Undated speech drafts

F. Legal and financial papers

- Folder
- 7: 1854-57
 - 8: Bankruptcy papers, District Court, May-June 1868 (notes from hearing)
 - 9: Bankruptcy papers, 1868
 - 10: Invoices, 1885
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Box 3

II. Legal papers as Judge and lawyer

A. Alphabetical listing by name

- Folder
- 1: Baldwin, James J., and David Burt, 1834-35
 - 2: Bates, Alexander, and John Meeks, 1834-35
 - 3: Beach, Charles: tax receipts, 1843-46
 - 4: Blossom, Ira A., 1835-50
 - 5: Brown, Joseph, 1835
 - Burton, Silas, 1835
 - 6: Bush, John T., 1835-36
 - 7: Champlin, Stephen, 1835
 - Chapin, Cyrenius, 1823-29
 - 8: Clark, John W., 1831-42
 - 9: Cline, John, and James Provost, 1836-42
 - 10: Coburn, Theodore, 1830-45
 - 11: Comstock, Henry, and Elisha Baker, 1835-37
 - 12: Crane, Elisha, 1835
 - Daley, Martin, 1835, 1847
 - 13: Darrow, Noyes, 1834
 - 14: Evans, David E., 1832-35
 - Gurnsey, 1835-46
 - 15: Jabez Goodell, 1824-37
 - 16: Jabez Goodell, 1839-45
 - 17: Jabez Goodell, 1846-47
 - 18: Jabez Goodell, 1848-49 (Jan. - Apr.)
 - 19: Jabez Goodell, 1849 (May-Dec.)
 - 20: Jabez Goodell, 1850 (Jan.-June)
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Box 4

- Folder
- 1: Jabez Goodell, 1850 (July-Oct.)
 - 2: Jabez Goodell, 1850 (Nov.-Dec.)
 - 3: Jabez Goodell, 1851 (Jan.-Feb.)
 - 4: Jabez Goodell, 1851 (Mar.-May)
 - 5: Jabez Goodell, 1851 (June)-1853 and n.d.
 - 6: Hall, John E., 1848
 - Hickox, Edward, 1830
 - Holcomb, Amasa, 1844
 - 7: Hollister, William, 1834-37
 - Hood, John M., 1835
 - 8: Hull, William, 1835-36

Huntington, Gordon, 1836
9: Insurance and Trust Companies, 1830-47
10: Joy, Ira, 1833-37
 Kip, Thomas, 1840
11: Lee, Daniel, and Stephen B. Green, 1835
 Miller, James, 1840
12: McAnnany, Sarah A.: account book, 1882-87 (w/enclosures)
13: McAnnany, Sarah A., Francis E. Alexander and William H. Alexander, 1882-86
14: McAnnany, Sarah A., and Mrs. Frances E.A. Wattles: account book, 1882-87

Box 5

Folder	1: Wattles, Mrs. Frances E.A.: account book, 1882-87
	2: Palmer, Alanson, 1835-38
	Peterson, Jesse, 1835
	3: Pratt, Hiram, Samuel Pratt and Pascale Pratt, 1834-47
	4: Rochester, William B., 1830-41
	5: Root, Henry, 1832-48
	6: Sackett, Niram, 1841-46
	Salisbury, Hezekiah A., 1835-37
	7: Seymour, Henry and Horatio Jr., 1835-39
	8: Shumway, Horatio, 1827-36
	9: Shumway, Horatio, 1836-42
	10: Shumway, Horatio, 1845-52
	11: Shumway, Horatio, 1852-59
	12: Stebbins, Charles, and David Gardner, 1848
Folder	13: Stevins, Charles, 1849
	Stevenson, George and Edward, 1833-45

Box 6

Folder	1: Taylor, William F.P., 1846
	Tifft, George W., 1846-49
	2: Townshend, Charles, Sheldon Thompson and George
	Coit, 1840-48 and n.d.
	3: Truscott, George, and John Green, 1837-42
	4: VanWoert, Jacob, and John Bliss, 1850-69
	5: White, John, 1815, 1842
	6: Willink, Wilhem, and Holland Land Company, 1828-36

B. Miscellaneous (alphabetically arranged)

Folder	7: Anderson - Burwell, 1829-48
	8: Cadwallader - Ensign, 1832-75
	9: Fanning - Long, 1825-49
	10: Maner - Noyes, 1819-49
	11: Osborne - Rose, 1822-48
	12: Russell - Young, 1814-50

C. Other records

Folder	13: [Real estate] agency book, 1861-[1864?]
	14: Legal papers related to steamboats and canal boats, 1841-48

Box 7

III. James Sheldon court records

A. Loose records and notes

- Folder 1: Superior Court of Buffalo, 1862, 1868, 1875
2: Superior Court of Buffalo, 1876
3: Superior Court of Buffalo, 1877 (Feb.-Mar.)
4: Superior Court of Buffalo, 1877 (May-Nov.)
5: Superior Court of Buffalo, 1878
6: Superior Court of Buffalo, 1879
7: Superior Court of Buffalo, 1880-84
8: Superior Court of Buffalo, n.d.
9: Court of Appeals cases, 1877-78
10: Subpoenas, 1839-70
11: Draft Head notes, 1875-76 and n.d.
12: Recorder's Court of the City of Buffalo, 1840
13: Miscellaneous court records, 1823-47
14: Miscellaneous court records, 1848-77
15: Miscellaneous court records, 1855-63
16: Miscellaneous court records, n.d.
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Box 8

B. Bound volumes

B1. Erie County Court

- Folder 1: Erie County Court record book, July term 1854
2: [Erie County Court?], Minutes of Chamber Proceedings, Aug. 1855-Nov. 1857
Vol.: Erie County Court Sessions, minutes, 1858 (Apr. 13-Nov. 24)
Vol.: Minutes of Erie County Court, Feb.-Nov. 1859
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Box 9

- Vol.: Minutes of Erie County Court, Feb.-Nov. 1860
Folder 1: Erie County Court: calendar, May term 1861
Vol.: Minutes of Erie County Court, Feb.-Nov. 1863
Vol.: Opinions: Erie County Court, Oct. 1852-Jan. 1861
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Box 10

- Vol.: Opinions: Erie County Court, Jan. 1861-Mar. 1864

B2: Supreme Court Of Erie County

- Folder 1: Blank trial notices, n.d.
Vol.: Supreme Court of Erie County: record book, Oct. 1852-Dec. 1860
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Box 11

- Vol.: Supreme Court of Erie County: law register, 1861-1867

B3: Superior Court of Buffalo

Folder 1: Calendars, 1876, 1885
2: Criminal term, book 1: Jan.-Feb. 1872
3: Criminal term, book 3: Feb. 1872
4: General term 1873 (Mar.-Dec.)
5: General term 1876 (Mar.-Dec.)
6: Opinions, general terms, Dec. 1877-Mar. 1879

Box 12

Folder 1: Continuation of July Special Term 1878, and September Special Term 1878
2: Civil trial terms, Sept. 1876 and May 1878
3: Civil trial term, May 1885

B4: Other Courts

Folder 4: Erie County Sessions, July term 1855
Vol.: Court of Appeals record book, Sept. 1870-Dec. 1871

Box 13

Vol.: Circuit Court, Canandaigua: record book, Nov. 1870-Nov. 1871

IV. James Sheldon (1792-1850) papers

Folder 1: Correspondence, 1817-22
2: Legal papers [of clients?]: ADS, Learned Scott and Charles S. Capron to Darius Burton, 7 Apr. 1828; ADS (mortgage), Jabez Goodell to John S. Camp, 15 May 1828

V: Grace Carew Sheldon papers

A. Correspondence

Folder 3: 1892-16
4: 1917-21 and n.d.

B. Writings

Folder 5: "From Pluckemin to Paris" (1899): ms, pp. 1-10
6: "From Pluckemin to Paris" (1899): ms, pp. 11-20
7: "From Pluckemin to Paris" (1899): ms, pp. 21-30
8: "From Pluckemin to Paris" (1899): ms, pp. 31-38
9: "From Pluckemin to Paris" (1899): ms, pp. 56-75
10: Stories and articles, n.d.
11: Stories and articles, n.d.

Box 14

Folder 1: "This Day in Buffalo's History": Clippings 1911-20
2: Clippings, ca. 1883-1892
3: Clippings, ca. 1892-99
4: Clippings, ca. 1899-1915

C. Clippings and notes re: NY Volunteer regiments

Folder 5: Clippings re: 21st Regiment N.Y.V., 1912-20
6: Civil War letters: A.H. Hoyt (100th Regt. N.Y.V.) to William B. Hoyt, 1863-64
7: Biographical sketches, n.d.
8: Biographical notes and sketches, n.d.

- 9: Biographical/historical notes and sketches, n.d.
- 10: Biographical/historical notes and sketches, n.d.
- 11: Civil War reminiscences of Philip Cooke, Co. F, 151st Regt., N.Y.V., [1915]
- 12: Papers re: 21st and 187th Regts., N.Y.V.

D. Other papers

- Folder 13: James Beaton: addenda to proposition for loan, 1920; Testimony of Maggie Boos in trial of Fergen vs. Kohl, n.d.

VI. Sara P. Sheldon papers

- Folder 14: "Pricking Inventions, Sewing Inventions"
15: "The New Education" (essay/address), n.d.
16: Correspondence, 1879, 1934

Box 15

VII. Theodore B. Sheldon Pan American Exposition guard records

- Folder 1: Guard reports, orders and other records, Apr.-Sept. 1901
2: Guard time books, May-Nov. 1901
3: Guard roll book, May-Sept. 1901

VIII. Caroline C. McIntosh (Mrs. Millard Fillmore) recipe and remedy books

- Folder 4: 2 books of remedies, recipes, notes, etc., n.d.
5: 1 book of remedies, recipes, notes, etc., n.d.

IX. Edward W. Crosby papers

- Folder 6: Poems, letters, clippings, photograph, 1900-09

Box 16

X. Scrapbooks and albums

- Vol.: Grace Carew Sheldon, clippings of "Seeing Buffalo of Olden Times" (Buffalo Evening Times), 1909
Folder 1: "The Sheldon Homestead": photo album re: Sheldon family home "The Evergreens," 1094 Main St., Buffalo; with genealogical charts; compiled by Carew Sheldon, 1950

XI. Scripture notebook and certificate

- Folder 2: Anonymous Scripture notebook, 1836
3: Certificate of Comitato Locale di Napoli of the Universal Exposition of Paris, 1900, re: gold medal awarded to Sabatino de Angelis and Sons, 1903

Collection reprocessed and retroconverted:
Peter Nelson
March 1993
Finding aid digitized
Amy Miller
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